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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the concept of human completion, as applied to both the African and the Afro-American experience, and how the search for completion by the individual influences the collective society. The theoretical concepts of Paulo Freire and Albert Memmi are applied to both groups. Both groups have been denied equal opportunity for education and self-realization. Voting has been used as a means to achieve social and educational goals but has been ineffective when it was not combined with the education necessary to provide critical analytical skills. The search for self-liberation has led to social conflict, as the power structure has prevented the minority from achieving its goals. The conclusions drawn include: (1) that collective action is not possible without individual action, which in turn depends upon the education of individuals; (2) that affirmative action programs are vital in assisting blacks in achieving education; (3) that collective action appears to be fading in the face of uncertain hope for individual achievement; and (4) that colonization still exists in the continued denial of equal opportunity. The problems inhibiting black progress in both groups are: (1) lack of meaningful employment; (2) shortage of housing; (3) breakdown of the family; (4) poverty; and (5) the resurgence of racism. (NL)

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EDUCATION AND THE QUEST FOR HUMAN COMPLETION: THE AFRICAN AND AFRO-AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES COMPARED

Dickson A. Mungazi, *Colgate University*

Introduction: The Concept of Human Completion

When Alfred North Whitehead discusses his ideas of the rhythmic character of educational growth as "involving an interweaving of cycles"1, he seems to suggest that one of the fundamental objectives of education is to produce a complete human being. The question is: How does education make a human being complete?

Consider the answer in the context of the aims of a thirteen-year old girl in a remote rural school in eastern Zimbabwe. Having observed the diligence and the unusually high level of interest with which she approached her school work, this individual could not resist the temptation to ask her the obvious question. Believing that she had a golden opportunity to tell him the true meaning of education, she responded with an assured self-confidence and measured self-pride as she said,

> You really want to know what I want to do after my schooling is completed? I have absolutely no doubt about that. After my primary schooling here I will go to St. Augustine's 2 for my secondary education. Then, with a first class pass, I will go to the University of Zimbabwe to study to be a doctor. I will then get married and have two children, one boy and one girl.....Without a family a woman remains incomplete....But without education her sense of self-fulfillment, or, better still, her completion, is impossible 3.

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1 Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* . New York, The New American Library, 1929, p. 373.

2 Founded in 1898 near Penhalonga by the Anglican Church, St. Augustine's is a leading secondary school in Zimbabwe.

3 A thirteen-year old girl during an interview with the writer in a rural school in eastern Zimbabwe, July 15, 1983.

What this girl said seems to suggest is that human completion has two dimensions, the collective and the individual, and that education plays a very important role in that endeavor. This study will focus on both as they relate to the African and Afro-American experience.

Although the odds were heavily against her 4, this level of determination was her own definition of the role of education in her own quest for self-fulfillment. It is evident that this African girl of humble origin was embracing the individual dimension of human completion. This is precisely the dimension which, for example, Linda Brown's parents took into consideration when they brought suit against the Board of Education of Topeka.

But when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in that case in 1954, it went far beyond the individual dimension to embrace the collective dimension. In similar manner, when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a transit bus in Montgomery in 1957, she thought she was merely asserting her individual right. But the result of her action led to a spontaneous collective response that involved an interweaving cycle of events between defining a

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4 She was 6th in a family of 9 children, and the two oldest children were already out of school due to economic difficulties that her family was experiencing. Her parents were simple peasant farmers. The comforts that children of her age in the school seemed to enjoy good clothes, shoes, etc., were almost unknown to her. This is a typical situation that one sees on most rural schools in Africa.

set of objectives and designing a strategy to fulfill them.

These examples suggest that throughout human history the quest for education has always been regarded as a means of bringing about improvement in human condition. Human completion occurs when one is satisfied with that improvement. Therefore, what Whitehead identifies as interweaving cycles of the educational process may be regarded as two essential dimensions, the collective dimension and the individual dimension. These two dimensions constitute an imperative condition which influences an educational endeavor.

This study attempts to discuss the applicability of the theories of Paulo Freire 5 of Brazil and Albert Memmi 6 of Tunisia. In doing so it will focus on the effect of the educational efforts of Africans and Afro-Americans in relation to both dimensions, and not on the formal educational process itself. These two ethnic groups were selected because it is a recognized historical fact that because in their respective societies, Africans and Afro-Americans have for many years been denied equal opportunity for education. They were effectively denied an opportunity to define and seek their own definition of completion or self-fulfillment.

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5 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* (Trans. by M.B. Ramos): New York: Continuum, 1982.

6 Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1965.

The Meaning and Prerequisites of Human Completion

The History of education, as it relates to these two groups, is the history of the search of the means to improve their conditions of life. It is a history of the struggle for self-improvement and to eliminate the conditions which oppressed them. Because modern man has recognized that military might alone does not ensure his security, he has espoused a new theory, *The ballot is mightier than the bullet.*

But man has also recognized that the process of the ballot requires collective action, but collective action requires dialogue, and dialogue requires skills. Skills come from education. In terms of the collective action two of the outcomes which education possible individual are the ability to engage in a critical analysis of the issues facing this society and to use his intellect as an instrument of solving problems. The first entails a collective dimension, and the second embodies the individual dimension 7.

For members of a society to respect the conditions that would enable the individual to fulfill his tasks in the pursuit of his objectives and at the same time meet the needs of society itself is to recognize the importance of both the collective dimension and the individual dimension. This means that in order to meet these conditions the concept of equality of educational opportunity based on the importance of the individual becomes an impera-

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7 Asen Balakci, "Conflict and Society", in Thomas Weaver [Ed.], *To See Ourselves* . Glenview, Ill. Scott, Foreman, and Company, 1973, p. 370.

tive prerequisite of solving human problems. Without an education to sharpen this consciousness to enable the individual to acquire the skills that he needs to help find solutions to human problems, society itself remains incomplete 8.

The reason why society places emphasis on education for the individual is that it enables him to play an important role in an endeavor to stop society from degenerating. It also helps one in formulating a definition of objectives consistent with his understanding of what he needs to do to ensure that completion 9. One must take the reality of these conditions into account in discussing the main purpose of education as aiding the quest for human completion. We must now examine how the interrelatedness, a reciprocal relationship, of the two dimensions of human completion operate as they relate to the educational endeavors of Africans and Afro-Americans.

Some Theoretical Considerations of Human Completion

To examine the implications of both the collective dimension and the individual dimension of the meaning of education one must study the character of the educational development of the Africans during the colonial period and of the Afro-Americans before and during the civil rights movement of the 1960's. This enables one to understand the nature of the environment in which they have historically attempted to secure education and the reasons

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8 Ibid. p. 371.

9 *Canaan Banana, Theology of Promise: The Dynamics of Self-reliance*. Harare: The College Press, 1982. p. 19.

for their efforts.

When Freire concludes that all human beings, no matter how oppressed, and so, presumed ignorant, are capable of engaging in constructive interaction with other people, he suggests that without education defined in accordance with their desire to improve their condition, they remain incomplete both as individuals and as a group. But in the process of becoming conscious of themselves, the oppressed embrace the principles of self liberation embedded in both the collective dimension and the individual dimension 10. What Freire seems to suggest is that while this struggle for self-liberation must, of necessity, entail the search for human completion, its outcome is a product of both the result of collective action and individual endeavor.

As Freire would see it, the collective endeavor has meaning only if the individual endeavor is related to it. What one sees as the essential character of Freire's theory, as it relates to the educational endeavors of people in the Third World, is that there comes a time when their limited educational opportunity makes it possible to reject the notion that they "are inhibited from waging a struggle for freedom"11.

One sees that once the oppressed, indeed, oppressed by the various conditions of human existence, become conscious of the importance of education to their own liberation, they will never cease to struggle to secure

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10 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. p. 39.

11 *Ibid*. p. 32.

more of it in order to realize their own definition of completion. One must understand that in terms of Freire's theory, the oppressor mistakes oppression for the oppressed's inherent lack of intellectual potential. By seeking an education intended to serve their needs, they not only dispel that erroneous impression, but they also find new strength to attain their defined objectives.

Freire's concept of dialogical encounter implies much more than the search for education "viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all men..."12. Dialogical encounter suggests a mutual collective interaction. But because the oppressed are denied an opportunity for an education designed to meet their needs, they are unable to engage in critical thinking, making the oppressor form erroneous impression that they are ignorant, and never stops to consider the fact that this is a result of oppression or the outcome of a denial of equal educational opportunity.

One also sees that when Freire suggests that if education does not make this humanization a reality, or when it fails to occur within the framework of the search for self-liberation, then social conflict of a major proportion becomes inevitable, not because the oppressed want to initiate radical social change of society, but because the oppressor wishes to foil their efforts to gain meaningful education. Further, when Freire concludes

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12 *Ibid.* p. 33.

that,

> To surmount the situation of oppression, the oppressed must first critically recognize its causes so that through a transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possilble the pursuit of fuller humanity 13,

he seems to recognize the imperative nature of the relationship of the two dimensions. One can conclude that this constitutes a combination of the two dimensions as a manifestation of the critical duality of human existence. Without the one, the other may not be achieved. The denial of equal educational opportunity to the Africans and Afro-Americans makes the task of integrating the two dimensions a very difficult one. But it is an endeavor which both groups, beginning in 1957, felt must continue.

Freire is not the only Third World thinker to develop a theory about the importance of education as an essential condition of human completion. Albert Memmi concludes in his theory of the colonizer and the colonized that the interaction between people of different cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic status is heavily influenced by the notion among the people of the privileged class that they are superior to those of the other 14.

Memmi's conclusion that the people presumed to be inferior become the colonized, and those presuming themselves to be superior become the colonizer suggests the creation of an environment in which race, affluence, and culture heavily influence the search for education for both the Africans

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13 *Ibid.* p. 34.

14 Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized.* p. 9

and the Afro-Americans in a way that places more importance on it than other ethnic groups. The colonizer defines it as a process of preparing the colonized to render more service to provide his own comfort. The colonized people define it as a means of eliminating their colonized existence 15. In a real sense, both the Africans and the Afro-Americans have been colonized because slavery in the U.S. and colonization in Africa had the safe effect, control of the thinking process.

The essential element in the pattern of behavior of the colonizer is his desire to design and implement an education for the colonized as an instrument or preserving his own position of privilege 16. Therefore, because the colonizer has political power which the colonized do not have, he exploits their education to make himself the principal beneficiary and to attune them to their own life-style. Essentially this is why segregation in education was so hard to fight in the U.S. and in Africa.

From Freire's and Memmi's conclusion that the principle of equality in both the educational process and in society, as perceived by the oppressor and colonizer, is rendered meaningless under the condition of their desire to perpetuate the myth of their racial superiority 17, serious implications for the educational process itself are evident. When Memmi suggests that instead of accepting the myth of their racial or ethnic inferiority, the colonized will arouse a collective nationalistic consciousness that influences

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15 *Ibid.* p. 13.

16 *Ibid.* p. 12.

17 *Ibid.* p. 14.

their uncompromising demand for equality of educational opportunity, he argues that meaningful education is a measure of their collective search for their own definition of their completion.

In doing so the colonized unconditionally reject the colonizer's Machiavellian definition of their educational pursuit 18. This leads to the conclusion that the act of rejecting a form of education imposed by the oppressor or colonizer constitutes an act of seeking a fuller meaning of human completion itself. The collective dimension of this endeavor is illustrated by the civil rights movement in the U.S. beginning with Rosa Parks in 1957 and in Africa by the rise of the African nationalist movements beginning in the same year. Let us now see how this happened.

Education and the African and Afro-American Quest for Completion: The Collective Dimension

Theories expounded by Freire and Memmi offer a viable perspective from which to discuss the objectives of the educational struggles of both the Africans under colonial conditions and the Afro-Americans under conditions of racial segregation and discrimination especially during the civil rights period of the 1960's. The political activities that precipitated an unprecedented rise of the civil rights movement in the U.S. and those that

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18 *Ibid.* p. 42.

gave rise to African nationalism came as a result of the rise of consciousness and the desire for collective action as a more potent force to deal with problems of their completion which both groups were denied in the past.

As both groups became aware of their colonized and oppressed conditions, respectively, they both rejected the myth of their presumed social inferiority, and, indeed, the Machiavellian definition of their place in society. What they wanted instead is nothing less than equality of educational opportunity as a manifestation of their search for better life. The question is: How could this be achieved, as individuals or as a group?

Memmi seems to take the view that at the initial stage of their struggle, the colonized must take the route of collective action to realize their goal. When he suggests that this level of consciousness is "an actuality of history"19, he concludes that one must accept his argument that the road to political independence in Africa and the attainment of limited civil rights in the U.S. were both products of the events that began to unfold in the 19th century. A case in point: helping to stage a boycott of the schools in Rochester, New York, in 1850 because Blacks were receiving an inferior education, Frederick Douglass (1817-1895), argued,

> The Negroes are chained together....We are one people, with one common degradation. As one rises, all must rise, and as one falls, all will fall. There is no time too precious, no calling too holy, no place to sacred to sacrifice our cause 20.

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19 *Ibid.* p. 7.

20 L. Bennet, *Pioneers and Protests.* Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, 1968, p. 203.

It is quite evident that Douglass was in effect rejecting the myth of the inferiority of the black race and that he was re-asserting the importance of the collective action of the black people's search for education as a means to collective completion so that the individual dimension could begin to take shape. In short Douglass seems to suggest that before the individual could seek his own definition of his completion, the collective definition must first come into being and that the educational process must help it come about.

While one can conclude that Douglass had a good reason to state this priority, one can also see that it is an irony of historical actuality that the U.S. Supreme Court, in the *Plessy* decision of 1896, sixteen years after Douglass's plea, elected to follow the collective route to limit the Afro-American search for their own definition of completion during the next fifty years.

When the same Supreme Court used the *Brown* decision of 1954 to reverse the *Plessy* decision it also elected to use the collective action to seek a solution to a problem facing the individual. Neither Homer Plessy nor Linda Brown considered the possibility of a class action suit, they merely thought that they were seeking solutions to the problems that they faced as individuals.

However, the actuality of the historical precedence of what Douglass said is evident in the work that other Afro-American leaders in the U.S. did.

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), and William DuBois (1869-1963), are only a few examples of what the black leaders have tried to accomplish to give the collective dimension a new meaning and at the same time attempted to re-shape the formation of the individual dimension.

The importance of the interweaving nature of these two dimensions seems to be what Martin Luther King, Jr (1929-1968) fully recognized as the impact of this historical actuality when he argued in 1964 that the denial of equality educational opportunity to black Americans had created a social environment that had to be re-constructed if they ever hoped to realize their goals as a people. King went on to add,

> When the locomotive of history roared through the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, it left the nation's black masses standing at dismal terminals. They were unschooled and untrained....We need a powerful sense of determination to banish the ugly blemish of racism scarring the image of America 21.

King was really suggesting that the U.S. of up to 1964 had actually left Afro-Americans individually sitting in the shadow of the political, socioeconomic and educational twilight zone that had engulfed their existence since the days of slavery. He was also suggesting that it was now time to make a new collective effort as conditions of the time demanded to give the collective dimension a new purpose. In essence, therefore, this was

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21 Martin Luther King, Jr, *Why We Can't Wait*. New York: The New American Library, 1964, p. 129.

King's call for education to help Afro-Americans realize their quest for completion.

King's conclusion was shared by his own father, who was equally clear about the importance of education in Afro-American quest for completion. This individual will never forget what Martin Luther King, Sr. told him in Atlanta in the spring of 1963, when he was only a sophomore in college:

> The civil rights movement is a call for human actualization, a completion of all men, not just the black people....It is also a movement to free the white people....The freedom of the black people is the freedom of America itself. The freedom of black Americans is interwoven with that of white Americans. It is a call for freedom to join hands in a collective effort in creating a social environment that enables each one of us to pursue our individual goals 22.

This leads to the conclusion that Freire reaches in his theory, and that is, in the process of seeking their own freedom and, thus, their completion, the oppressed also collectively seek to liberate their oppressor23. That this is a manifestation of the completion of society itself is exactly why in 1982 George Wallace, for example, regretted his infamous statement of June 11, 1963, "I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever", and began to seek the votes of the black citizens of Alabama, a group of people he once vowed to deny an equal opportunity for education as a means of defining the extent of their self-fulfillment. This is also why Ian Smith the last prime minister of colonial Zimbabwe admitted in 1983

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22 Martin Luther King, Sr., during an interview with this individual in Atlanta, May 17, 1963.

23 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* p. 39.

during an interview with this individual,

> It was hard for us to believe that the advent of a black government meant, in effect, freedom of the white man,....freedom from fear of reprisals....It is evident that it was not possible to deny the black people an opportunity for self-fulfillment by denying them an opportunity for education 24.

There is no doubt that the quest for education by Afro-Americans and Africans to realize their own definition of completion was having a profound impact in the dynamics of human relationships in both the U.S. and Africa by 1960. On the African side of the Atlantic, the Africans were aggressively seeking an education that they knew would help them in their quest for their own definition of future. In rejecting the ambiguity, or what William Du Bois call "the twoness of black existence" and demanding the right "to attain self-consciousness, to emerge from this twoness, a double self, into a better and truer self "25, the Africans saw the ambiguity of their life under colonial condition from the perspective of its harmful effects.

The historical actuality that Memmi says is essential for the colonized to recognize in order to acquire an education that would help them re-shape their life into a more meaningful future is evident in the efforts that leaders like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Albert Luthuli of South Africa, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania all made to help

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24 Ian Smith, during and interview with this individual in Harare, Zimbabwe, July 20, 1983.

25 Evelyn Rich, *Africa: Traditional and Modern*. New York: Random House, 1972. P. 457.

their people erase the ambiguity that imposed serious limitation on both their life and their collective quest for completion 26.

From what we have discussed arise two questions: How does the concept of human completion affect both society and the individual? How does the collective dimension relate to the individual dimension? One can find answers to these questions from what the Africans and the Afro-Americans themselves have attempted to accomplish in a manner that demonstrates the applicability of the theoretical concepts that Freire and Memmi expounded.

The conceptual perspective of their arguments immediately becomes clear in several examples. When in 1962 the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) issued a statement of its principles and goals, it left no room for doubt as to how the Africans wished to utilize education to achieve their stated collective objective:

> We are concerned only with our determination to end the socioeconomic, political and educational exploitation to which the colonial forces have subjected us...Our self-fulfillment and freedom are the ultimate manifestation of the liberation of our society....The individual Africans cannot be free until we as a group are free.... Therefore we seek a total transformation of Zimbabwe from the colonial status to independence under an African government 27.

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26 William Smith, *Nyerere of Tanzania*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1981. p. 53.

27 Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU), a statement of principles and objectives, December 19, 1962. By courtesy of the Zimbabwe National Archives.

This is also the same concept which Martin Luther King, Jr. used to speak on behalf of Afro-Americans in 1964 when he concluded that their educational endeavors implied political implications as a manifestation of their struggle for selfhood. Recognizing the impact of the lack of educational opportunity for black Americans, King concluded,

> The average Negro is born into want and deprivation. He struggles to escape his circumstances and is hindered by a lack of education and the absence of social and economic opportunity. The shadow of political and intellectual bondage is hidden in subtle disguise 28.

It is quite evident that the historical actuality that the political dimension of education as an instrument of giving effect to the collective dimension in both the U.S. and in Africa that King referred to had its precedence in the recognition by President Franklin Roosevelt, and Prime Minister Winstone Churchill on August 11, 1941 in the Atlantic Charter, stating, "We respect the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live."29. It is logical to conclude that the two leaders had seen that the denial of equal educational opportunity to the Africans in British colonial Africa and to Afro-Americans translated into the denial of political participation.

There is yet another example of conceptual framework of the applicability of the educational process to the collective dimension of com-

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28 Martin Luther King, Jr, *Why We Can't Wait*. p. 23.

29 The Atlantic Charter, August 11, 1941. By courtesy of the British Embassy, Harare, Zimbabwe.

pletion as it relates to black Americans and Africans. On assuming office on January 20, 1961, President John Kennedy appears to extend Memmi's concept of historical actuality much further when he recognized the need to balance his call for the exploration of space, a new frontier, with his call for equal educational opportunity as a manifestation of the freedom of all people.

In stating, "Our basic goal remains the same, a peaceful world community of free and independent states, free to choose their own future..."30, Kennedy was acknowledging the value of the Atlantic Charter and the importance of accepting the call from black Americans for better educational opportunity to enable them to realize their search for their own fulfillment. Recognizing that this was essential for society's own completion, Kennedy felt that it was necessary to adjust U.S. exploration of space to the exploration of the means to sustain the fundamental principles of Afro-American yearning for education to realize their goals.

This is why he fervently responded to call for the enactment of the most comprehensive civil rights law, which he envisaged as a viable form of the collective dimension of the completion of black Americans. This is also why his administration confronted Governor Ross R. Barnett of Mississippi and Governor George Wallace of Alabama over the admission of

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30 G. Mennen Williams, *Africa for the Africans*. Grand Rapids (Mich.): William Eerdermans, 1969, p. 30.

James Meredith and a group of black students, respectively.

Two things are clearly distinguishable from Kennedy's role in an effort to provide equal educational opportunity to black Americans. The first is that he had become part of the collective dimension as a more powerful means of realizing the individual dimension in promoting the collective dimension. The second thing is that once Kennedy saw the importance of the collective process to achieve the individual dimension, he did everything possible to make sure that both dimensions were successful. In this manner the two dimensions developed a reciprocal relationship, the success of one depended on the other.

Education and the African and Afro-American Quest

For Completion: The Individual Dimension

Our discussion of Memmi's theory of self-actualization and of Freire's concept of self-consciousness through education would be incomplete if one fails to recognize an important aspect of the educational process as it is related to the quest for human completion evident in the search for education by the individual to realize his completion. One can see that while political freedom is an essential manifestation of collective completion, it is the educational development of the individual that evinces the ultimate liberation of society itself. This truth was recognized by Ndabaningi Sithole, a founding member of African nationalism in Zimbabwe. In 1983, Sithole told this individual during an interview,

Education provides an individual a means of

> articulating and expressing ideas...It gives him a wider scope, a depth to his thinking, a comprehensive grasp of who he really is...in relation to his own needs and to society itself...It makes an individual a complete human being. Without education a complete human being, society remains incomplete. Therefore, education meets the needs of society only if it is designed to meet the needs of the individual 31.

The essential nature of the relationship between the collective dimension and the individual dimension helps to explain the clarity of Alfred North Whitehead's concept of the interweaving character of the educational process.

One sees that education designed to ensure human completion in terms of the collective dimension enables the individual to engage in an equally important dimension of his own completion as a manifestation of society's own completion. Both Freire and Memmi unhesitatingly conclude that when the individual is oppressed or colonized, society itself pays the price. Therefore, the freedom of the individual, evident in his educational attainment and his ability to think critically builds the foundation on which society must be structured. Both argue that mental freedom as a product of the educational process cannot occur under oppressed or colonized conditions.

It is equally true that while collective action only comes from individual ability to think creatively, it is the individual action that makes the collective action possible. Therefore the education of the individual is essential to the development of society itself. The importance of this relationship was recognized by Robert Mugabe, the prime minister of

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31 Ndabaningi Sithole, during an interview with this individual, in Harare, Zimbabwe, July 22, 1983.

Zimbabwe since 1980, who said in 1983,

> To set the mind free and to make imagination creative, to make judgment informed, objective and fair, are as important a cause of struggle as the struggle for political and economic emancipation....., and cannot be taken for granted32.

This is the nature of relationship that education seeks to promote between the two dimensions of the search for human completion relative to Africans and Afro-Americans. It is not possible to separate this relationship and still have education serve its real intended purpose.

Summary and Conclusion: The Interweaving Cycles of the Educational Process

We have discussed the applicability of the essential elements of Freire's and Memmi's theories on African and Afro-American quest for education as an instrument of fulfilling their search for completion and Whitehead's concept of the relatedness of the effort and collective action. From this discussion one reaches four conclusions. The first is that education is essential to both the collective and individual dimension of human completion. In assessing the efforts that both the Africans and the Afro-Americans have made to secure education to achieve these two dimensions it seems that their ability

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32 Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, "Literacy for All in Five Years" (Speech given in launching the National Adult Literacy Campaign, July 18, 1983). By courtesy of the Zimbabwe Ministry of Information.

to adjust and retain the essential elements of their respective identities is what has positively influenced their development though limited success.

While the quest for their completion has by no means been accomplished, their understanding of what they would wish to achieve is unquestionably clear. One hopes that in time they will once more see the need to re-structure their objectives to attain their real and genuine freedom. The interweaving cycles of their struggle for education helps broaden their horizon and set goals accordingly. Although the process towards completion cannot be reversed, it has been painfully slow for Africans and Afro-Americans.

The disturbing reality of this situation is that in the absence of such programs as affirmative action, negative attitudes will resurface and habits and practices of discrimination will once more become the order of things. Adam Curle appears to take this line of thinking when he argues, "Education for liberation is that which attempts to liberate us from the habits of thought, action or feeling which make us less than human"33. In essence, Curle is warning against stereotypes, a definite form of myth that both Freire and Memmi say should be eliminated if meaningful human interaction must take place for the benefit of all as an outcome of the quest

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33 Adam Curle, *Education for Liberation*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973, p. 127.

for completion for all.

The third conclusion is that there seems to be an interesting phenomenon relative to the rise of a new level of self-consciousness among the Africans and Afro-Americans in connection with Freire's and Memmi's theories. Once the Africans achieved the collective dimension of their struggle in form of political independence, they entered a more challenging phase, the search for individual dimension. But they have not yet achieved the individual dimension. Once the Afro-Americans reached a stage where they thought the U.S. had restored to them the rights intended in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, they, too, re-directed their efforts towards the quest for individual completion. This, too, has remained illusive.

The problems making it hard for both groups to realize their individual dimension illustrate how education is important in the struggle for human fulfillment. The reality of this situation is that both the collective dimension and the individual dimension have not been fully re-defined in the context of the forces that oppose their advancement. The reality of the interweaving cycle of the educational process crucial to its success has not yet been fully understood by those in positions of power. This is necessary in order to strike a working balance between the two dimensions. What one sees is that regardless of the efforts that are being made to improve the situation, the education of both the Africans and Afro-

Americans may continue to deteriorate in the future unless something drastic is done to reverse the trend 34.

The fourth conclusion is that in both the U.S. and Africa, the years 1957 and 1964 seem to give Memmi's concept of historical actuality a new definition, an uncertain future. The collective action that yielded tangible results since 1964 appears to fade away in the face of uncertain hope for individual achievement. Unless education is designed to meet this fundamental objective, the quest for both dimensions will remain illusive.

It is essential that both the Africans and the Afro-Americans view their own advancement from a perspective of a new realism, that the spirit of cooperation that witnessed the birth of Pan-African movement following the end of the First World War is a strategy that they can utilize with a greater degree of success than in the past because both groups are much more informed about the common problems which they face. In Africa neo-colonialism, aided by severe economic and political problems, is preying upon the life of the people with a vengeance. In the U.S. economic deprivation of the Afro-Americans has equally taken a heavy toll.

The ability of both groups to use the educational process to bring this reality into focus would help accelerate their quest for completion.

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34 For some disturbing statistics on the rapid deterioration of education in Africa see, for example, "The Chicago Tribune", October 1, 1981.

They must realize that the most potent form of colonization and oppression exists in the continual denial of equal educational opportunity. While the institutions that controlled their life viewed them as a group, they themselves must now attempt to influence a working balance between the collective action and the individual action so that their efforts have a broad leverage to help them attain their objectives.

Among the problems that inhibit both groups are: a lack of meaningful opportunity for employment, shortage of housing, the breakdown in the family, the increase in the phenomenon of the single family, increase in poverty. All these translate into new powerful forces of oppression and colonization. While the results of this situation have been more evident in the black Americans, the Africans have suffered equally severely in various forms, such as extended drought, political an social disintegration, economic hardships, have all preyed upon their life with a forceful brutality.

The second conclusion is that the threat to the progress that black Americans have made comes partly from the negative attitude of the present U.S. administration and partly from the resurgence of racism as has been shown recently in New York and Georgia. The threat to the limited progress that they have made collectively comes from the threat to such programs as affirmative action. This is how white America may once more strengthen the stereotypes that handicapped the black Americans prior to the

civil rights movement.

To end affirmative action is synonymous with ending the means that Afro-Americans have used to make advancement. Since its inception, affirmative action has been a major means of creating viable conditions for black Americans to define their own completion. In similar manner, programs such as positive discrimination in Africa have been threatened by difficult problems beyond the ability of national leaders to solve.

The threat to affirmative action and to positive discrimination appears to constitute what national figures such as Jimmy Carter and Julius Nyerere defined as bringing into play the elements that have retarded the efforts of the underprivileged people, who have come to depend upon the viability of the educational process to initiate reform and provide an environment for national development 35.

Indeed, Carter and Nyerere would add that without an education to give the individual the skills he needs to sustain his own freedom and self-actualization, there would be no freedom for society itself. This is the reality of the dimension of human completion that Africans and Afro-Americans must take collectively into consideration in designing new strategies of dealing with the problems that they face in today's world. These strategies must embrace both the collective dimension and the individual dimension in order to have an interweaving cycle of the educational process yield desired results.

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35 William Smith, *Nyerere of Tanzania*. p. 56.